CHAP. V.

ANIMADVERSIONS ON SOME OF THE WRITERS WHO HAVE RENDERED WOMEN OBJECTS OF PITY, BORDERING ON CONTEMPT.

THE opinions ſpecioufly ſupported, in ſome modern publications on the female character and education, which have given the tone to moſt of the obſervations made, in a more curſory manner, on the ſex, remain now to be examined.

SECT. I.

I SHALL begin with Rouſſeau, and give a ſketch of the character of women, in his own words, interſperſing comments and reflections. My comments, it is true, will all ſpring from a few ſimple principles, and might have been deduced from what I have already ſaid; but the artificial ſtructure has been raiſed with ſo much ingenuity, that it ſeems

ſeems neceſſary to attack it in a more circumſtantial manner, and make the application myſelf.

Sophia, ſays Rouſſeau, ſhould be as perfect a woman as Emilius is a man, and to render her ſo, it is neceſſary to examine the character which nature has given to the ſex.

He then proceeds to prove that woman ought to be weak and paſſive, becauſe ſhe has leſs bodily ſtrength than man; and, from hence infers, that ſhe was formed to pleaſe and to be ſubject to him; and that it is her duty to render herſelf *agreeable* to her maſter—this being the grand end of her exiſtence*. Still, however, to give a little mock dignity to luſt, he inſiſts that man ſhould not exert his ſtrength, but depend on the will of the woman, when he ſeeks for pleaſure with her.

'Hence we deduce a third conſequence 'from the different conſtitutions of the ſexes; 'which is, that the ſtrongeſt ſhould be maſter in appearance, and be dependent in fact 'on the weakeſt; and that not from any

* I have already inſerted the paſſage, page 99.